

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5920
INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
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CAPE TOWN ALSO FOR EMBASSY
DEPARTMENT PASS AF/S

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: CVIS CGEN SF
SUBJ: US ATTORNEYS SOLICIT IMMIGRATION CLIENTS IN SA

1. JOHANNESBURG A-13 DISCUSSED IN DETAIL DESIRE OF SOUTH AFRICANS TO EMIGRATE TO US. THESE TRENDS ARE CONTINUING AND THE PROSPECTS FOR AN IMMEDIATE DECLINE ARE REMOTE. THIS BELIEF IS SUPPORTED BY STEADY STREAM OF APPLICATIONS BEING RECEIVED AND INCREASING NUMBER OF US ATTORNEYS VISITING SA TO SOLICIT IMMIGRATION BUSINESS.

2. NO LESS THAN 7 ATTORNEYS HAVE VISITED CONGEN SINCE DEC 76. ONLY ONE ATTORNEY CAME ON BEHALF OF CLIENTS SOLICITED IN US. REMAINDER CAME SOLELY TO PICK OUR BRAINS RE US IMMIGRATION PROCEDURES AND TO FEAST ON LUCRATIVE IMMIGRATION BUSINESS HERE.

3. ONE ATTORNEY, WHO SET UP OFFICE IN HOTEL NEAR CONGEN, ALLEGEDLY CHARGED SA RAND FIFTY PER PERSON JUST TO TALK TO PERSONS DESIRING INFO RE IMMIGRATION. OTHERS HAVE ADVERTISED THEMSELVES BY WORD OF MOUTH AS IMMIGRATION ATTORNEYS WHO CAN GUARANTEE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ANY PROSPECTIVE CLIENT WILL GET IV.

4. ATTORNEYS' PRESENCE HAS CAUSED WIDESPREAD PUBLICITY THROUGHOUT JOHANNESBURG, MOST OF WHICH UNFAVORABLE. MORE IMPORTANTLY, THEIR PRESENCE HAS CAUGHT ATTENTION OF BUREAU OF STATE SECURITY (BOSS). ALTHOUGH BOSS CONSIDERS ATTORNEYS ACTION A RIP-OFF AND HAS LABELED THEM "SHYSTERS", IT TOLD LOCAL NEWSPAPER "THE STAR"

IT NOT PREPARED TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST GROUP.

5. THE STAR, HOWEVER, PLANNING DISGUISE ONE OF ITS CRIME REPORTERS AS PROSPECTIVE IMMIGRANT AND SEEK OUT ATTORNEYS IN ORDER OBTAIN INFO RE THEIR M.O. NEWSPAPER WOULD THEN HOPE MAKE COMPARITIVE STUDY UTILIZING PRESCRIBED IMMIGRATION PROCEDURES EMPLOYED BY CONGE, AND WILL NO DOUBT EXPOSE PRESENCE OF ATTORNEYS IF IT BELIEVES PEOPLE BEING TAKEN FOR RIDE.

6. COMMENT: CONOFF, WHO HAS PURPOSELY KEPT DISTANCE FROM ATTORNEYS, BELIEVES THEY CAUSE US FAR MORE HARM THAN GOOD. THEIR CLIENTS ARE OFTEN ILL-ADVISED ON IMMIGRATION PROCEDURE. ALSO SERIOUS PUBLIC RELATIONS PROBLEMS ARISE WHEN PROSPECTIVE IMMIGRANTS ARE NOT ABLE APPLY FOR AND OBTAIN IV'S OVERNIGHT, AS THEY HAVE BEEN LED TO BELIEVE BY THESE ATTORNEYS. OF GREATER CONCERN TO US, HOWEVER, IS QUESTION OF THE MORALITY OF THEIR SOLICITATION. THEREFORE REQUESTS DEPARTMENT'S ADVISE RE OUT ROLE IN DEALING WITH ATTORNEYS AS WELL AS YOUR COMMENTS RE COOPERATION WITH NEWSPAPER SHOULD IT BE REQUESTED. EARLY GUIDANCE REQUESTED AS STORY WILL MOST LIKELY SURFACE IN NEWSPAPER ANYDAY.

KIRBY

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